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STEPS IN THE PRELIMINARY PLANNING  
FOR MAKING A SURVEY BY PERSONAL INTERVIEW  
AND THE PROCEDURES FOR CARRYING OUT SUCH A STUDY

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1. Preliminary plans for the study.

- a. Plans for a study in the State should be started well in advance, usually up to 6 months before the time the field survey is to be made. A great deal of time is required to work out the details for this type of work, and careful preliminary planning is very important.
- b. A person from the Division of Extension Research and Training, of the Federal Extension Service, is assigned to the study, referred to hereafter as Division representative. The type of study being made determines the person assigned to the study. The Division representative visits the State at the beginning of the planning of the study and usually works with the leader of studies in the State, if there is such a leader, and with the overall studies planning committee if one has been appointed by the director.

2. Planning meeting in the State.

- a. The questionnaire. The State studies committee should outline the nature of information to be obtained. "What do we want to know?" The first draft of the questionnaire is often prepared at the meeting of the studies committee. Sometimes only a preliminary listing of significant questions for which answers are desired is made. These questions are later organized into the first draft of the questionnaire.
- b. The sample plan. Should the information be obtained in one county or more? And from what group within the county-- all rural people? White, Negro? Etc.
- c. Plans for the field study. The information is obtained by personal interview. The number of interviewers required depends upon the amount and nature of information to be obtained, the distances to be traveled, conditions of roads, and other factors. Both the farmer and the homemaker should be interviewed if both farm and home programs are studied. The usual size of study requires eight interviewers for about 5 to 5½ days, including one-half day for a preliminary training meeting for the interviewers at the survey headquarters. The interviewers should be extension workers or others thoroughly familiar with extension work and of comparable ability. Usually the county extension agents do not serve as interviewers in their own counties, since the families that know them might not be entirely frank in answering questions.



- d. When survey is to be done. Dates set for the survey work should be suitable in relation to the time of the interviewers, the convenience of the rural people, condition of the roads, weather, and other factors. Effort should be made to visit every family in the sample areas selected regardless of the weather or condition of the roads.

### 3. Work to be done between the planning meeting and the field survey.

- a. The State should complete the questionnaire, obtaining approval of all concerned within the State, and send it to the Division representative in the Federal office.
- b. The Federal office submits the questionnaire to the agricultural representative of the Bureau of the Budget for approval.
- c. The State duplicates the questionnaire, after the State, Federal office, and Budget Bureau have all approved.
- d. Three copies of a map of the county or counties to be studied should be supplied by the State. These maps should show townships, roads, the number of occupied dwelling units in each township, and if possible the location of the dwellings on the roads. The sampling procedure is worked out by the State and Federal office, and sample areas are designated on the map.
- c. The State arranges for the interviewers, cars, handling expense accounts, equipment (such as pencils and clip-boards), and a headquarters-room. The survey headquarters-room should be either at the county agent's office or at some other more centrally located place where there is a room large enough to meet and work together at tables.

### 4. The field survey.

- a. The Division representative usually assists with the interviewing, the checking of questionnaires, and the keeping of the necessary field records. He will pay for the hire of a car and driver used in interviewing. It usually works best for each interviewer to have a car, and for one person to talk to both the farmer and the homemaker.
- b. The Division representative assigned to assist in the conduct of the survey usually arrives in the county a day before the survey is to start, to check final arrangements. The training period for the interviewers may be held during the late afternoon of that day or the forenoon of the day the interviewing begins. It is important that all interviewers attend the preliminary training meeting.
- c. Each day the Division representative goes over the completed questionnaires very carefully to catch errors, omissions, and inconsistencies. Each night a conference is held at the survey headquarters to talk over interpretations and ways of entering information on the questionnaire, to make corrections in completed questionnaires, locate homes visited on a master map, assign serial numbers to interviews, and revise assignments for the following day. A survey day is usually from 8 o'clock in the morning until 9 or 10 at night.

5. Analysis of data.

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Tabulations are planned by the State person in charge of the survey, with such guidance by the Division representative as may be necessary. The findings are submitted to the State committee for interpretation, after which a preliminary report is prepared. After review by the Division representative and State persons concerned, adjustments are made and the final report prepared for duplication.

6. Publication.

The report is duplicated and distributed by the State, proper recognition being given to the authors of the report and the cooperative nature of the enterprise.

7. Time schedule.

A time schedule should be agreed upon, indicating the appropriate time it is anticipated that various stages of the study, from completion of the questionnaire to publication of the report, will be completed.

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